

A 2012-98

Mrs. Lynn Frodsham
PO Box 86
Halsey, NE
69142

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United States Postal Service
Citizens and Government Officials of Nebraska

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Postal Regulatory Commission
Office of the Chief Admin. Officer

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POSTAL REGULATORY
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

To Whom It May Concern:

I feel the closing of the Halsey, Nebraska Post Office - 69142 - should be reconsidered. The reasons are:

- 1) When Kathy Hand conducted the town hall meeting on 29 June 2011, she told the 80 to 100 residents attending that we would not see any big changes in the delivery of our mail. Since our mail now arrives at approximately 7:50 A. M. it is in our PO boxes by 8:30 AM. We expected that to continue to be the case. Not so! If one reads the docket, it states that our mail will be delivered between noon and 3: 45 P. M. That is a huge change in time.
- 2) There are 64 box customers in Halsey and 12 route customers. The docket states that there will be no additional cost as the Postal Service has accounted for the 64 box customers to be added to the route. What the Postal Service has failed to consider is the fact that there will be an addition of another 19 to 35 families the route will pick up when the transportation on the route from Thedford to Halsey is discontinued and the delivery route from Halsey to Purdum is extended - to start at Thedford and end at Purdum (as the docket states). The docket doesn't reflect the additional cost of adding the customers that live between Thedford and Halsey who currently have free boxes in Thedford, or time for the carrier to make the additional stops. The 34 additional miles was the only consideration, not the extra customers, workload, nor added expense.
- 3) The USPS doesn't seem to consider that the Elsmere and Purdum residents also utilize the Halsey Post Office for their afternoon mailing needs, as the dispatch time at the Purdum Post Office is 11:45 A. M. These residents drive 20 to 40 miles to get to a PO in the afternoon if they have mailing needs. The road from Halsey to Purdum is known as the Purdum Road only. It is not a state highway.
- 4) The Halsey office is spacious enough to accommodate the workload and has good parking space to allow easier access for customer parking over the crowded Thedford office, which sits in the middle of a block off the main highway. Please consider, too, that the Halsey Post Office is centrally located between Thedford and Purdum.
- 5) If the Halsey office were kept open it could lower the work load at the Thedford office, thereby saving money. Also, it would seem advisable to utilize the already handicapped accessible PO in Halsey and accommodate the needs of these 3 communities.

6) Another option would be to work on reducing the miles traveled by carriers who deliver to one or two rural families at a distance of 4 or 5 miles on private roads. Money and time could be saved by putting boxes at the beginning of the main access road. Having all the individual boxes on the main access road would eliminate a lot of expense and time.

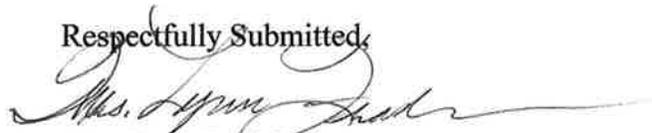
7) Post Office boxes are issued free to local residents. Is there a reason that these are free? I, myself, would be willing to pay the cost of a Post Office box to assure that my mail arrived timely and safely at the local Post Office in Halsey. This seems to me to be a huge loss of revenue and could help offset the cost and fees to pay to keep the Halsey, NE Post Office open.

8) No Saturday delivery to save money? I feel that the Postal Service should totally stop delivery to everyone and not just those that get mail on a route. The PO would save even more money as they wouldn't be paying employees' that work in the offices and put mail in the PO boxes. Just simply close the PO period on Saturday for one and all.

9) My final concern is the driving route from Halsey to Purdum/Elsmere, NE. Basically, Purdum/Elsmere is a dead end and then there is the turn around back to Halsey and hence on to Thedford. Elsmere is 10 miles from Purdum with a 25 minute estimated driving time. I am enclosing a map and would like the officials to visualize the road, the conditions and the topographical issues that are included with the driving of this route. This is not a major road, but a secondary, narrow, winding, hilly and dangerous drive under the best of conditions. This seemingly small route is time consuming. This will not be easily added onto the Thedford to Halsey to Purdum driving route. The expected overtime costs for the driver more than make this financially unreasonable. Google lists the drive as being 12 miles with an estimated 29 minutes driving time. The road isn't even shown on the topographical map issued by the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Again, the road from Halsey to Purdum is known as the Purdum Road only. It is not a state highway.

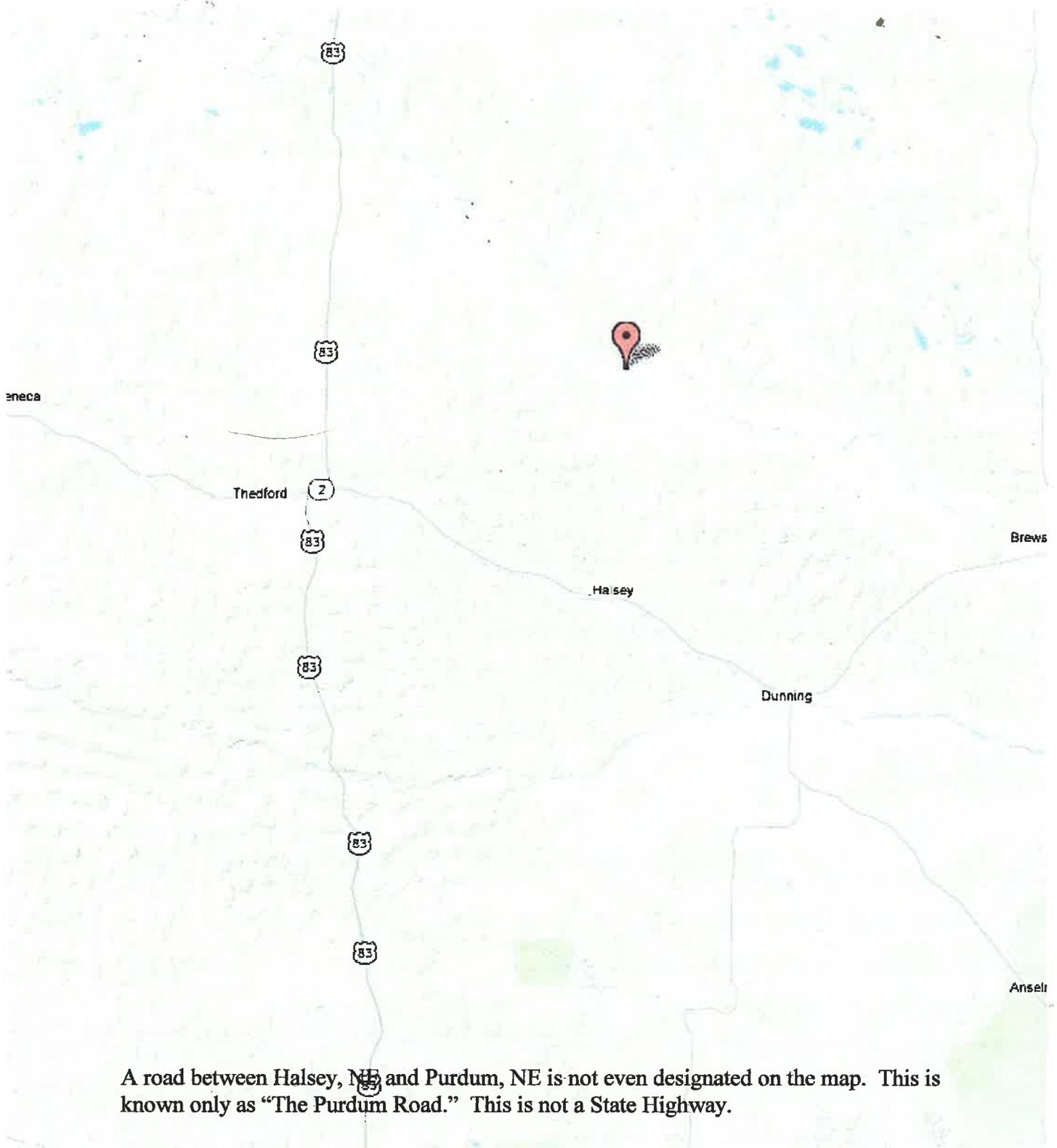
Please read my brief defending the appeal (enclosed) and reconsider the financial logic concerning the closing of the Halsey Post Office. It truly doesn't sound financially logical.

Respectfully Submitted,



Mrs. Lynn Frodsham
PO Box 86
Halsey, NE
69142

Enclosures (2) Topographical Map from Halsey, NE to Purdum, NE
Brief responding to Appeal Not to Close the Halsey, NE Post Office



A road between Halsey, NE and Purdum, NE is not even designated on the map. This is known only as "The Purdum Road." This is not a State Highway.

Google Maps has the mileage of Purdum, NE, exactly 12 miles from Halsey, NE. The driving time is estimated at 29 minutes.

Elsmere, NE is 10 miles from Purdum with a 25 minute estimated driving time.

Office of the Secretary
Postal Regulatory Commission
901 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20268
13 January 2012

Re: Docket No. A2012-98

Dear Shoshana M. Grove:

This brief is being filed to provide the Commission with arguments to support my appeal. Appeal Docket No. A2012-98. Regarding Docket No. 1366007-60142.

The effect of closing the Post Office in Halsey, Nebraska on the community are numerous. The convenience of a local office and official to handle the incoming and outgoing mail of a number of senior citizens.

Safety concerns with location of a cluster box as we live on a major highway and access could be treacherous due to traffic and weather. There is also the weather hazard if the Post Office decides we need to use individual boxes at our homes. If we need the rural driver, we would have to get to the box in all kinds of weather.

Many of us get our medications delivered by the USPS and the convenience of indoor delivery and safety with all types of weather is a concern.

The business community has needs that demand immediate attention and most businesses have the same hours as the USPS. It is convenient to use the local Post Office, rather than having to close the business to travel to another Post Office. Meeting the rural carrier (if on a regular schedule) is another drawback as is waiting for the next day's delivery for supplies.

There is also a public bulletin board in the Post Office that is used frequently.

Regarding the economic savings to the Postal Service from closing our local Post Office. We have one full time Postmistress and one part time employee. Our local building is rented at a cost of \$5,868.00 per year excluding utilities. According to the page I am enclosing the replacement service would be \$8,918.00 (See attachment). Our route runs from Thedford, Nebraska; to Halsey, Nebraska; to Purdum, Nebraska (about 60 boxes); and then continues with rural delivery, which includes the town of Elsmere, Nebraska. The driver then returns to Halsey and loads more mail and packages and delivers them to Thedford, Nebraska. I am told by locals that the route is 158 miles per day. If we have a rural carrier and he/she does this route along with the local delivery of the 65 to 75 boxes that are in this Post Office only and gets paid for his/her time, maintenance on their vehicle and mileage, I can't see how this would come to only \$8,918.00 per year.

The new proposal also requires the rural driver to stop and do Postal Service work. I feel this would be impossible to do on this route in an 8 hour day. The only pay schedule I could find for rural postmasters was dated 2005, but in 2005 it appears the rural drivers were making more than the estimated \$8,918.00 dollars per year that is said to be our economic savings.

We also have a local United Church of Christ; The Sandhills elementary School; The Bessey Ranger District of the Nebraska National Forest and Grasslands, which is open year round; 2 Construction Companies; One Bar and Restaurant; The Halsey Frontier Inn and Guest House with camp sites; and a 4H Camp and some eBay and other internet sellers. I believe some of these send metered letters and this wasn't addressed in the Docket. The Forest Service also purchases Money Orders at the local Post Office. There is sufficient incoming mail to keep a rural driver tied up for long time spans.

Our local Post Office carries forms, boxes, labels, envelopes and handles nearly every mailing need for local, regional and overseas delivery.

The historical value of the Post Office is nil as the original was a sod house. The first Postmaster, appointed 30 November 1887, was Richard Emry.

We were told at our town meeting on June 29, 2011 that our addresses would remain the same. How would this happen if we have postal boxes at our homes? We would have to change our Post Office addresses to our physical addresses.

The Postal Service did not take into consideration that there are 2 routes involved in getting our mail already. This is mentioned above with the route originating at the Thedford, Nebraska Post Office and 18 miles to the Post Office in Halsey, Nebraska. The other is the contract route in which the carrier actually starts delivering mail to the Route customers. This fact was not brought out at the original meeting and is not discussed in the docket.

Arrival time of the Halsey mail is usually in Halsey and in the Boxes at the Post Office at 8:45 AM, if not sooner. If our mail was sorted in Thedford, Nebraska and then the Rural Carrier had to deliver on the route before she arrived at Halsey and then started to deliver the mail here, it would be much later in the day, if it could be delivered to all that day at all. This is not mentioned in the Docket either and I feel it should have been, as it will greatly impair our service.

The Halsey Post Office has recently been updated and the interior is handicapped accessible. The door is not, but it is not unheard of for the Postmistress to open the door for those in wheel chairs, if not a friendly neighbor. The building itself is brick and sound and should last for a number of years.

There is a new furnace, water pump, box section and parcel lockers, handicapped accessible counter line and a new roof which was completed in 2010. The building should need no major repairs or renovations for years.

The smaller Post Office requires less equipment and our packages still have stamps on them, which does require the time of the office worker, but must save considerable money in the financial department.

Has the number of homes, boxes and stops been considered for a rural route and the number of miles a driver will travel? How many stops would a driver make and how much time is designated to deliver larger boxes to the door? Does this include snow days when our roads are closed, yet the mail is still delivered to the main Post Office. The condition of our roads, topography, and weather conditions including snow, wind and flooding should be considered when determining the time schedule to complete this route safely.

A few homes have been on the market lately and the businesses here hire locally, so there is a probability that the town population will go up rather than down.

The Forest Service, the Double T Bar and Restaurant, the motel and the school are required to take and send in water samples to the State of Nebraska. These samples have to be delivered overnight and with the closure other means of delivery would need to be found.

The local people who get daily papers delivered from Broken Bow and North Platte and let's not forget the stamp collectors.

The Post Office is like a local meeting place for friends and neighbors who gather their mail and visit and exchange information.

To provide us with regular and effective service which we in rural areas depend on for our essential needs. Our Post Office is also on a main highway and being in the middle of the Sandhills, a number of tourists as well as the campers who use the Forest Service Campgrounds use the Postal Services that are available.

We in Halsey feel strongly the maintaining of the Halsey Post Office is reasonable and important for the success and survival of the community and businesses.

Respectfully Submitted,

M. Lynn Frodsham